

Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Referring to page 2, paragraph 4 of the Office Action, Claims 1-3, 5, 6 and 8-27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,475,696 to Majumdar et al. (“Majumdar”) in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,492,005 to Ohbayashi et al. (“Ohbayashi”) and U.S. Publication No. 2002/0058589 to Serizawa et al. (“Serizawa”). Applicants traverse for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 is directed to an ink-jet recording medium comprising a support having disposed thereon at least one colorant-receiving layer, wherein a back-coat layer containing an inorganic laminar compound having an aspect ratio of 100 or more is provided on a surface opposite to a surface of the support having the colorant-receiving layer. The laminar compound is water-swallowable synthetic mica. The colorant-receiving layer contains a water-soluble resin.

At paragraph 12, page 4 of the Office Action, it is asserted that the resin layer of Serizawa is combined with the invention of Majumdar, and the nanocomposite material layer of Majumdar is provided both on the topside and the bottom side of the support; thus, it is asserted that the combination of Serizawa and Majumdar teach the claimed backcoat layer and the claimed undercoat layer.

Applicants respectfully submit that a person having skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the disclosure of Serizawa with the teachings of Majumdar, as further discussed below.

Majumdar discloses an imaging material comprising a nanocomposite material layer which comprises inorganic particles, such as mica, and which is provided on at least one side of a support.

Serizawa discloses a thermal recording material or a pressure-sensitive recording material, comprising a resin layer interposed between a support and a recording layer. Serizawa discloses "in a case in which, for example, heat is applied continuously at a high temperature, the moisture in the recording layer vaporizes and moves toward the support. Due to water vapor and gasses accumulating at portions of the boundary surface between the recording layer and the support, so called blistering occurs, in which the support and the recording layer deform." *See* Serizawa at paragraph [0007].

Accordingly, the resin layer disclosed in Serizawa is provided between a recording layer and a support so that the transfer of water vapor and gases is prevented, resulting in the prevention of blistering. *See* Serizawa at paragraph [0024]. Not only does Serizawa fail to disclose a backcoat layer containing mica which is provided between the support and the recording layer, Serizawa fails to disclose that the resin layer can be provided in any region other than the region between the recording layer and the support.

In other words, in order to achieve the prevention of blistering, it is essential that the resin layer of Serizawa is provided between the recording layer and the support. Thus, unlike the nanocomposite material layer disclosed in Majumdar, the resin layer of Serizawa cannot be arbitrarily provided in any other region in the recording material. *See* Majumdar at column 11, lines 62-65.

Therefore, a person skilled in the art would not have been motivated to apply the configuration of the resin layer of Serizawa to any layers other than a prime layer, such as the back layer, of the photographic recording material of Majumdar. Additionally, Majumdar does not specifically disclose a backcoat layer comprising water-swellaable mica. The particles used in the Examples of Majumdar are smectic clay.

Moreover, none of Majumdar, Ohbayashi, and Serizawa disclose a backcoat layer which contains water-swellaable synthetic mica. Thus, it would not be possible for a person skilled in the art to conceive of the present invention from the combination of the cited references.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

Respectfully submitted,



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